



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 16 February 2021

by Paul Thompson DipTRP MAUD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/D/20/3264658

Griff, 30 Foxley Drive, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2EB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Amy and Bruce Rodda against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/20/1580/HH, dated 19 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 8 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is erection of a single-storey rear extension, two-storey side extension and replacement of the existing garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for Erection of a two-storey side extension, single storey side/rear extension and replacement garage, together with the introduction of new materials, at Griff, 30 Foxley Drive, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 2EB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 3/20/1580/HH, dated 19 August 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: FD-PL-01, FD-PL-06, FD-PL-07, FD-PL-08, FD-PL-09, FD-PL-10 and FD-PL-11.
 - 3) The external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed in the materials specified on the planning application form, Design and Access Statement and/or the submitted drawings.
 - 4) The garage hereby permitted shall be kept available at all times for the parking of motor vehicles by the occupants of the dwelling and their visitors and for no other purpose.

Procedural Matter

2. Despite the description of development set out above, I consider the description found on the Decision Notice better reflects the scheme that is before me and that which the Council considered. The development proposed is therefore for 'Erection of a two-storey side extension, single storey side/rear extension and replacement garage, together with the introduction of new materials.' I have therefore dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the existing house and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal concerns an interwar detached house situated to the east side of a residential street. The existing house includes deep overhanging eaves to all parts of its roof and is predominantly finished in render with red brick to the plinth, chimney stacks and front doorway, and clay tiles to the roof and detailing of the bay window and windowsills. While there is considerable variation to the style, mass, siting, and materials palette of the houses in the street, they are situated in large plots with generous rear gardens. Many of the houses have been extended or altered, including those to either side of the appeal property. The character and appearance of the street has therefore evolved, including the spacing between houses.
5. The proposed two-storey side extension would be set back from the front façade and down from the existing ridge of the house, with a shallower pitched zinc roof and primarily brick front and side elevations. However, the front façade would include a double-height squared projection with windows, which would be clad in batten on edge timber. The form, appearance and verticality provided by this element would be sympathetic but provide a suitable contrast to the existing double-height bay window.
6. The first floor of the two-storey extension would continue beyond the rear of the house with a flat roof and would also be clad in batten on edge timber. It would be only a small part of the overall scheme but its design would be innovative given that it would pierce through to the ground floor of the proposed single-storey rear extension and be suspended above the internal living environment. It would be visible through the glazed portions of the ground floor.
7. The single storey part of the side extension would be set back toward the rear of the two-storey section and wrap around into the rear extension. It would be finished in render and glazing, with a new brick chimney. The relationship of the extensions with one another would diminish the consequential impact of their overall scale and how this would be perceived from the street and gardens of neighbouring houses.
8. The fenestration of the existing two-storey rear projection would also be altered to incorporate a greater extent of glazing, including a Juliet balcony at first floor, the proportions of which would be suitable in comparison to the form and verticality of that part of the house. The proposed garage would also be a relatively small addition to the house constructed of red brick in place of the current rendered finish and incorporate a hipped zinc roof, rather than a flat roof. Moreover, it would be largely to the same footprint as the existing but increased in size to the rear to include a workshop.
9. The Officer Report suggests that the character and appearance of the existing house and street scene should be maintained, but this would limit the potential for design evolution and stifle innovation. The Reason for Refusal also suggests that the proposal does not respond to local distinctiveness. However, it is evident that the street already features houses of varying design and

construction and has altered and evolved through new houses and extensions and alterations to others.

10. The proposal would add considerably to the existing house, particularly in terms of the width of the two-storey side extension. However, its scale would but be broken down into component parts and clearly defined through modern design elements and composition of matching and modern materials that would be sympathetic to the architecture of the house and appropriate to the size of its plot.
11. I have also had regard to the extension erected at No 32, which the Council suggests is of lesser width than the appeal proposal. However, it could not be said to be subservient to No 32, as it has resulted in a higher roof to the house, while the proposal would be set down from the roof. Notwithstanding this, I have considered the appeal scheme on its own individual merits.
12. In light of the above, I conclude that the size, scale, design, and materials of construction of the proposed development would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing house and the surrounding area. Hence, it would accord with the design aims of Policies DES4 and HOU11 of the East Herts District Plan (Adopted October 2018), particularly in relation to the subservience of and innovative approach to proposed extensions. The proposal would also not conflict with paragraphs 127 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly in respect of development that is sympathetic to local character, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

Other Matters

13. There is no substantive evidence before me to suggest that the proposal would adversely affect the supply of mains water and gas or place an undue strain on sewage disposal. Furthermore, any damage caused to property during construction would be a private matter between the parties involved, as would any encroachment onto a private access. None of these matters raised therefore alter or outweigh my conclusion on the main issue.

Conditions

14. In addition to the standard time limit for the appeal, in the interests of clarity and the appearance of the existing house, I have specified the approved plans and that the materials of construction of the proposal should be in accordance with the materials listed in the application. A condition relating to the use of the garage for parking is also reasonable and necessary due to the increase in the number of bedrooms associated with the proposal, and the Council's requirements for off-street parking, having regard to highway safety.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Paul Thompson

INSPECTOR